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In the Days of the Councils: a Sketch of the Life and Times of Baldassare Cossa (afterward Pope John the Twenty-Third).

By EUSTACE J. KITTS. (London: Archibald Constable and Company. 1908. Pp. xxiv, 421.)

It is unfortunate that Mr. Kitts should not have succeeded in finding a more suitable title for his volume, for instead of taking us, as he promises, through the period of the councils, he acts as our guide merely through the first and least important council, namely that of Pisa, and instead of the complete life of Baldassarre Cossa he carries the Neapolitan cardinal to the threshold of the papacy, only to draw the curtain at that breathless moment. The book is really a history of the Great Schism, and no reason anywhere appears why the author, who consistently shows himself to be a single-minded and straightforward writer, should fail to say so on the title-page, especially as he has succeeded in preparing, if we bar one hundred pages of introductory matter which resumes the relations of the Church and the empire in the Middle Ages and is as tedious as a school primer, what can unhesitatingly be called a sound and painstaking, though a by no means original, work. Its substance and core is a careful setting forth of the various methods for terminating the schism proposed or followed at one time or another, coupled with a clear enumeration of the difficulties that thwarted each new effort in behalf of religious peace and unity. The documentation is not always entirely satisfactory, owing to the circumstance that the author, although his studies have carried him back to the original sources, leans largely upon the excellent secondary works dealing with the period, and frequently yields to the temptation of referring undisputed facts to them. A somewhat amusing consequence of this dependence is seen in his ready adoption of German words, for no other reason apparently than that they happened to be in the text before his eyes. Thus the predatory inhabitants of certain Italian islands are represented as lying in wait for Strandgut (p. 142), the castle of Sant' Angelo appears under the disguise of the Engelsburg (p. 154), an important baron of Piedmont is introduced to the reader as the Markgraf of Montferrat (p. 201), and the German King Rupert, in the spirit of carnival merry-making, dons a grotesque masquerade and makes his bow to us as Rupert Clem (pp. 165, 198).

The two commanding personalities of this period of church history are the Spaniard Pedro de Luna, who became Pope Benedict XIII. of the Clementine obedience, and the Italian Baldassarre Cossa, afterward Pope John XXIII. The author minutely traces the relations of each of these men to the Great Schism, and is scrupulously just to the personal charm, the persuasiveness, the rock-like steadiness of Pedro, as well as to the daring, the vigor and the political unscrupulousness of the Macchiavellian Baldassarre. But though even-tempered as the historian should be, Mr. Kitts pays the price for this cold merit by his failure to

endow his leading personalities with the warm breath of life. They remain pawns moved over the chess-board of Europe by the hand of an invisible *fatum*, and although the author may have excellent grounds for a cosmic philosophy which minimizes the part of the individual on the human stage, the present reviewer, without quarreling with the author's fundamental views of life, may yet regret their literary result, and deplore that a book of such considerable scientific value should lack the human touch.

There is an excellent index and a good working bibliography. The illustrations are nine in number and not particularly notable. The Lists of Rulers, added for the reader's convenience, are not as complete as might be, for the kings of England and Scotland are missing entirely, and in the German list both Wenzel and Rupert have been overlooked.

FERDINAND SCHEVILL.

Documents Nouveaux sur les Moeurs Populaires et le Droit de Vengeance dans les Pays-Bas au XV^e Siècle. Lettres de Rémission de Philippe le Bon. Publiées et Commentées par CH. PETIT-DUTAILLIS, Professeur Honoraire à l'Université de Lille, Recteur de l'Académie de Grenoble. (Paris: Honoré Champion. 1908. Pp. vi, 226.)

THE body of this valuable work is made up of a collection of petitions to Philip the Good, of Burgundy, which were selected by the editor as valuable documents for the social history of the fifteenth century. To accept the allegations of petitions as proofs of facts is of course impossible; but the allegations of such petitions, whether true or untrue, throw valuable light on the state of society, for true or not they are almost necessarily in accordance with the manners and customs of the time. It would be dangerous to accept the statements of such petitions as representing typical occurrences. The facts recited, while entirely within the range of possibility, are by the very fact that they form the subject of a special proceeding likely to be exceptional in their nature. If we wish to determine the frequency of occurrences, such as homicide, riot, or incontinence, we cannot rely on such documents as these, but must go to such rich mines of information as the judicial rolls of England. The editor possibly relies too much on the recited facts of feud, murder and incontinence in these petitions as illustrating typical life in Flanders at the middle of the fifteenth century; but the documents are of great value as supplementing other evidence on this point, and as filling in the historical outlines with living color.

Probably the most valuable portion of the work is the introductory matter prefixed to the two series of documents. The first series, intended to illustrate the popular customs and ideas of Ghent and Liège, is prefixed by a short but admirable statement of certain habits of the people. The dishonesty and the murderous temper of the population, its

licentiousness and petty broils, are well described, and the facts of the petitions cited in proof of them. The second series of documents, illustrating the family wars, truces and peace, and the legal or quasi-legal right of vengeance, is introduced by a long and scholarly discussion, in which the condition of the medieval law on these points is thoroughly treated. The family proceedings by which pacts of peace were made and legal truce enforced are curious examples of the persistence of the fundamental German conception of the family as a legal unit; a conception which still prevails on the Continent in the "family council" for the settlement of various matters after the death of the head of a family. While there seems to be no trace of this Germanic idea in the common law of England, the idea of family entity still remains in the mountain districts of the South, where many of the scenes described in the petitions and discussed in the learned introduction might have taken place. The family feud is not so fully a thing of the past that even the historian of to-day can afford to neglect this study of medieval life.

The introduction takes up in turn: family feuds and the right of vengeance in Flanders; the family truce and the more permanent and binding family peace; the development of the law regulating such matters; and the legal right of private vengeance. The learned introduction is summed up in the concluding, and, may it be added, quite European sentence: "Vengeance will not disappear from our habits, the sentiment of honor will persist; but at least our texts show its disappearance from the law."

Vie de Jeanne d'Arc. Par ANATOLE FRANCE, de l'Académie Française. In two volumes. (Paris: Calmann-Lévy. 1908. Pp. lxxxiii, 553; 483.)

The Maid of France: Being the Story of the Life and Death of Jeanne d'Arc. By ANDREW LANG. (London and New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 1908. Pp. xvi, 379.)

M. ANATOLE FRANCE has read prodigiously in the literature of the first half of the fifteenth century, both French and also that of western Europe at large. He has put the result of his reading into a coherent and interesting narrative. Notwithstanding his industry and his gifts, his prejudices and his treatment of the authorities make his life of Jeanne d'Arc dangerously untrustworthy. Errors of statement and of reference inevitably creep into any book of a thousand pages, however carefully prepared, and M. France asks pardon for these mistakes most charmingly. Ordinarily the reviewer may point them out in a note, and may concern himself chiefly with the general quality of the book reviewed; but M. France's errors exhibit a strong and constant bias which vitiates the narrative as a whole. His brilliancy may well impose upon an ordinarily intelligent reader, while even a student may be impressed by the number and variety of his citations.